

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
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TAGS: ELAB, XT, EEC
SUBJECT: ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS ON EMPLOYMENT AND
INCOMES POLICY

REF: EC BRUSSELS 5601

SUMMARY. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION
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(ETUC) MET IN BRUSSELS JULY 4 TO DISCUSS A DRAFT PAPER ON EMPLOYMENT AND INCOMES POLICY TO BE PRESENTED TO EC SUMMIT JULY 16-17. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION ON THE THRUST THIS PAPER SHOULD TAKE, A COMPROMISE POSITION WAS ADOPTED AND WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE SUMMIT. FURTHER DISCUSSION ON EMPLOYMENT AND INCOMES WILL TAKE PLACE AT NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING SEPTEMBER 26 IN GENEVA. THERE WAS NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE IMPENDING RESIGNATION OF SECGEN RASSCHAERT, BUT THIS WAS REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED AT THE JULY 4 MEETING AND PRESUMABLY WILL BE ON THE AGENDA OF NEXT MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. REPRESENTATIVES OF AFFILIATES IN 15 OF THE 17 COUNTRIES IN THE ETUC MET IN BRUSSELS JULY 4. IN ADDITION TO THE EC 9 THESE INCLUDED NORWAY, SWEDEN, FINLAND, SWITZERLAND, AUSTRIA AND SPAIN. IN A BRIEF PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING THE MEETING, ETUC PRESIDENT HEINZ VETTER OUTLINED THE ETUC DEMANDS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND INCOMES POLICY. HE INDICATED THERE WERE SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SCANDINAVIAN AND OTHER COUNTRIES WHO WISH TO PURSUE LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES AND THOSE COUNTRIES SUCH AS BRITAIN, ITALY, AND BELGIUM WHO ARE MORE CONCERNED WITH SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS TO IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, HE INDICATED A COMMON POSITION HAD BEEN WORKED OUT TO BE PRESENTED TO UP-COMING EC SUMMIT MEETING. ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY JEAN KULAKOWSKI SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD US THAT FINAL DRAFTING ON THIS PAPER WAS LEFT TO THE SECRETARIAT AFTER THE BASIC OUTLINE WAS AGREED UPON BY THE COMMITTEE. A COPY OF THIS PAPER WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL AFTER IT HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE SUMMIT. KULAKOWSKI ALSO SAID THE ETUC WILL CALL FOR CONVENING A EUROPEAN "SOCIAL SUMMIT" IN NOVEMBER WHICH WOULD INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS AND THE MINISTERS OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS FROM EC COUNTRIES. ETUC WILL CONTINUE ITS DISCUSSION OF EMPLOYMENT AND INCOMES, PARTICULARLY LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES, AT ITS SEPTEMBER 26 MEETING IN GENEVA.

2. THERE WAS NO MENTION AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE IMPENDING RESIGNATION OF GENERAL SECRETARY THEO RASSCHAERT (REPORTED REFTEL). HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO A BRITISH EMBASSY SOURCE, THERE WAS A PROCEDURAL DISCUSSION OF WHETHER PASSCHAERT SHOULD BE REPLACED BY AN INTERIM SUCCESSOR UNTIL THE NEXT CONGRESS OR IF A PERMANENT SUCCESSOR SHOULD BE CHOSEN BEFORE THAT POST IS VACATED. APPARENTLY NO DECISION WAS REACHED ON THIS QUESTION, AND IT IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXPECTED TO BE CONSIDERED AGAIN AT THE NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING. LIKEWISE NO ACTION WAS TAKEN ON FILLING THE VACANT POSITION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PRESS OFFICIER. ACCORDING TO SAME SOURCE ONLY CANDIDATE FOR THIS POST AT PRESENT IS LOUIS BUONACORSI OF FRENCH CGT-FO.

3. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ALSO ADOPTED A LENGTHY DECLARATION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR WHICH CONTAINS ALL THE EXPECTED

PHRASES FAVORING WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

4. COMMENT: FROM ALL INDICATIONS THE JULY 4 MEETING WAS NOT
A VERY PRODUCTIVE SESSION AND PARTICIPANTS WERE MORE IN DISAGREEMENT
THAN IN ACCORD ON SEVERAL QUESTIONS. FIRESTONE

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